

Creative Writing – Master of Fine Arts – Mid-Cycle Review & SLOA Year

Current Compliance Year: 2022-2023

Mid-Cycle review

Recent Recommendations

Feedback will include recommendations from the last Expedited Review or from your most recent review by your school or college. You may not see any feedback or recommendations until you have completed your first full or mid-cycle review.

Response to Previous Recommendations (if any):

There were no recommendations from the previous SLOA that were communicated to the MFA program.

Student Learning Outcomes

The previous Student Learning Outcomes Assessment has been submitted as its own report. Going forward you will use the following prompts to discuss the success of your most recent SLOA plan and address your assessment activities since your last SLOA report (typically the past two years or since your last program review).

Learning outcomes feedback from last review:

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

Discuss your SLOA findings, changes you are making and what you hope to see as a result:

Type of data collected: The MFA SLOA committee [redacted]—chair; [redacted] and [redacted] collected and discussed the following data, in line with our MFA SLOA: MFA theses of students graduating 2021 and 2022: 7. Exit surveys from graduating MFA students: 0 [note: spring 2021 the English department had no administrative staff; in spring 2022 the English department's sole administrative staff member was out sick; exit surveys were sent out early October 2022 and no responses received]. Five-year post-graduate surveys: the lack of administrative staff has made the systematic collection of this data impossible. Instead, the committee collected information from social media and award announcements.

Conclusions: many of our alumni are successful in 1. Their artistic careers and 2. Their professional careers. 1. Awards: recent alumni have won such awards as the Rasmuson Individual Artist Award, Michigan Writers' Cooperative Press chapbook award, PEN/Robert J. Dau Short Story Prize for Emerging Writers; they continue to be published in highly regarded journals, or through book publications. 2. Alumni have gone on to doctoral programs in creative writing, or closely aligned fields, and/or have taken up tenure-track academic positions in creative writing, and composition/rhetoric.

Discussion: our program is successful in preparing our students both artistically and professionally. Data collection has been hampered by insufficient administrative staff, and will be for the foreseeable future. The five-year post-graduate survey should be replaced by an on-going informal collection of data from social media (as we used for this SLOA).

Discuss the curricular changes made based on assessing your SLO. If you haven't made any curricular changes, please explain why not and address what you did notice in the review, including strengths of your curriculum through the assessment of your outcomes:

Curricula changes were made in order to best accommodate the pandemic, allowing for changes in modes of delivery (some students were admitted distance-only), and to deal with problems such as isolation, fear and anxiety. No other curricula changes were possible in a time of so much disruption.

Are communication outcomes embedded in the SLOA Plan?

As of 2017 all Baccalaureate programs were required to embed the communication outcomes within their SLOA Plans, this is optional for non-Baccalaureate programs.

Not Embedded

Student Success

To access the Student Success Dashboard please sign into a UA computer with VPN connection (if not on campus). You will need your UA credentials and it is best accessed with the most updated version of Chrome, Edge, Firefox or Safari browsers; Internet Explorer is not supported. You will need to filter the data to see your programs. If you need assistance in finding the data for your programs, please contact your data liaison or [Julia Manfredini](#) in the PAIR office.

Data Liaisons

Each school or college has a team of Data Liaisons to help you analyze the data provided in the portal and may be able to help you see your data in multiple contexts. You can find a list of data liaisons on the resources page for Program Review.

The college or school level committee will also have access to this data with the goal that by providing these visualizations data availability will be increased.

Data supplied within the dashboard linked below is intended for Academic Program Review and not for any other purpose.

[Student Success Data Dashboard](#)

Previous Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

Student Success Data Trends:

No change in degrees awarded, Increase in majors

If equity gaps were found in any of your disaggregated student success data, please explain how you plan to address those gaps. Please contact your data liaison or make an appointment with [Julia Manfredini](#) to learn more about analyzing your data.

Numbers of students in the MFA program are small: generally 3-6 students are admitted each year (the number largely dependent on the number of TAships available), making it difficult to assess

disaggregated data in a statistically meaningful way. Overall, the numbers of [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] students remained approximately the same. Most of the students identified as [REDACTED] (70-80%). Note: since numbers admitted to the program are small, even one student identifying themselves in a category other than white can disproportionately affect the data. In the committee's discussion, no meaningful equity gaps were identified in the data.

Optional Data Explanation

Feel free to share more of your thoughts on the data provided.

Numbers of students in the MFA program are small: generally 3-6 students are admitted each year (the number largely dependent on the number of TAships available), making it difficult to assess disaggregated data in a statistically meaningful way. Staffing shortages (including no administrative staff for spring of 2021) has made collection of data e.g. exit surveys, impossible to administer and collect data.

High Impact Practices

According to the AAC&U, High-Impact Educational Practices "have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial to college students from many backgrounds." UAF is particularly interested in Undergraduate Research and/or Scholarly Activity because it is one of our mission fulfillment indicators, but all of these researched High-Impact Educational Practices should be reflected in your program's student learning outcomes and curriculum.

Previous Feedback

Feedback will be provided once you have completed a full or mid-cycle review.

High-Impact Practices Used in this Program

Please use the following fields to discuss how your program is using the high-impact practices, successes and known issues and solutions, or ways you are considering incorporating them in the future. If you are not using any of the high-impact practices listed, please use the "Other or None of These," field to share what your program is doing to help students be successful.

High Impact Practices that currently apply to your program:

Internships, Writing-Intensive Courses

Other or None of these (explain)

Submission

Submitter & Collaborator Names

Submitter: Gerri Brightwell
Collaborators: Rich Carr, Sara Johnson

Submitter Email

gabrightwell@alaska.edu

College or School Review Committee

The college or school committees set the tone for helping each program feel seen during this process. We have provided you with strength-based feedback tags to attach to this program review. Please select as many as applicable.

Overall Recommendations

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Explanation of Recommendations

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Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (tags)

Missing active verbs

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Feedback (narrative)

SLOA plans are very similar or identical for the MA and MFA. It is essential that different programs have different outcomes- if students are intended to learn the same things, how are the programs differentiated? There are some revisions that could make your plan more meaningful and useful to the department and we will follow up to assist. For example, Rather than describing what the faculty will be teaching, or what the students will receive, a direct learning outcome should describe what knowledge or abilities the student will gain as a result of being in the program, and how that will be measured. The program might consider revising the outcomes to include more “action” words. It is difficult to assess things like “understand” or “recognize.” “Identify”, “explain”, or “analyze” are clearer outcomes to assess. <https://tips.uark.edu/blooms-taxonomy-verb-chart/>

Your graduates seem to be going on to successful careers. Since you have difficulty distributing the exit survey and getting back responses, it might be worth considering other assessment measures that will be easier for the department to maintain.

Profile Feedback

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Financial Feedback

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Student Success & Equity Feedback

There seems to be some misunderstanding about the data and what applies to the program vs. the department. Data can be disaggregated at the program level, which would add more specificity to your report. The Accreditation and Assessment Office will follow up to walk you through the process. The committee agrees that the small number of students makes identification of trends difficult, but there does seem to have been an increase in majors, which is positive.

High-Impact Practices Feedback

While the AAC&U’s high-impact practices are intended for undergraduate programs, it is useful to consider whether there are equivalent practices that would foster graduate student engagement and success, such as cohort or community building, active mentorship, or professional development opportunities.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan
Department of English
Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Creative Writing
College of Liberal Arts
Approved April 18, 2024

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose	Intended Objectives/Outcomes	Assessment Criteria and Procedures	Implementation (what, when, who)
MISSION STATEMENT: The MFA in Creative Writing program is a rigorous three-year residential program combining an intensive focus on the writing of fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and dramatic writing with an in-depth study of literature.	Production of written work in students' chosen discipline of a quality comparable to material published in contemporary literary magazines and journals.	Review of theses.	Every third September, a committee of four faculty members will review assessment materials and write a summary report. Results will be discussed by the full department, and changes to the program will be implemented as needed.
	Write clearly and engagingly; produce sustained coherent critical writing at an appropriate level of sophistication for graduate study.	Review of theses.	Assessment committee will review theses.
	Complete program in a timely manner.	Completion of coursework and theses within a period of 3-5 years (for each full-time student).	Assessment committee will review the Advancement to Candidacy forms for time to degree.
	GOAL STATEMENT: 1. To allow students to work closely with individual faculty mentors as they progress toward completion of a publishable-quality thesis. 2. To better understand the writing craft	Exit survey results and post-graduation achievement and career information. * Adequate preparation to pursue a career in writing, publishing, or (with further study) in an academic career in creative writing or a related field. * Recognition of own work's strengths and weaknesses. * Familiarity with the literary marketplace (book and journal). Plans and adequate preparation to seek publication.	Exit surveys of program graduates, plus post-graduation achievement and career information gleaned from social media and personal communications with faculty.

through a comprehensive reading list. 3. To provide students with opportunities to present creative work publicly through publication and presentations. 4. To provide teaching and tutoring experience for students with graduate assistantships. 5. To provide editing and promotional experience for select students through internships, helping to promote literary events, and serving as editors on a nationally recognized literary journal.	Consideration of the graduate program at UAF to be of high quality.	Exit survey results and post-graduation achievement and career information.	Exit surveys of program graduates, plus post-graduation achievement and career information gleaned from social media and personal communications with faculty.
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Submitted by: Gerri Brightwell, Director of Creative Writing, 1 April, 2024